

**Minutes**  
**King County Rural Forest Commission**  
**February 15, 2001**  
**Eastgate Public Health Center**

*Commissioners present:* Jean Bouffard, Gordon Bradley, Rudy Edwards, Steve Ketz, Ken Konigsmark, Doug McClelland

*Commissioners absent:* Bill Kombol, Fred McCarty, Andrew Schwarz

*Exofficio members:* Connie Blumen, Lori Grant

*Staff:* Kathy Creahan, Bill Loeber, Kristi McClelland, Benj Wadsworth

*Guests:* Rob Harrison, Dave Warren

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

**Minutes Approval**

- Motion 1-201 “To adopt the November 8, 2000 and January 16, 2001 minutes as written.” Moved, seconded and approved.

**Staff Report**

Benj introduced Rob Harrison, an architect involved with the Northwest Ecobuilding guild. Rob is interested in serving on the Commission as the representative of the consumer end of forest products. Rob stated his interest in developing a local source of certified wood products. Discussion ensued about the certification process and the different certification systems. Gordon Bradley suggested that Bruce Bare, a professor at the UW, would be interested in presenting to the Commission about certification. There was general agreement that this would be a good idea.

Benj gave an update about filling the vacancies on the Commission. Matt Mattson, the environmental planner for the Snoqualmie Tribe has expressed interest in serving as the tribal representative. Ken Konigsmark asked if it would be possible to invite potential members to join the meetings before being confirmed. All agreed that would be a good idea.

Benj notified the Commission that he and Kathy had met with Council staff to the Natural Resources, Parks and Open Space Committee to discuss a presentation of the monitoring report results. Council staff suggested that the Commission, rather than staff, should

present the results. Several commissioners suggested that it would be better to present to the Council of the Whole. Doug McClelland suggested that perhaps the Commission could present the information to the NRPOS Committee and at that meeting suggest to them that it would be possible to present to the larger Commission later on. Kathy suggested incorporating additional information about King County forests into the presentation.

Benj passed on an invitation from Councilmember VonReichbauer for commissioners to attend a Council meeting at Cascadia Community College on Monday, February 26. The agenda will focus on water reuse challenges and opportunities.

Gordon Bradley announced a lecture at the UW by John Gordon, a professor at Yale, addressing the regulation of sustainable forestry. The lecture will take place on Wed, February 21 at the College of Forest Resources.

Kathy Creahan distributed a brochure put out by the Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA). She feels that WFFA is doing a good job of public relations. Ron Sims is quoted in the brochure. Kathy suggested that Sherry Fox, the president of WFFA, could present to the Commission. Doug suggested that she could talk about the WADNR small landowner conservation initiative. Kathy suggested that Steve Stinson, the director of that initiative at WADNR could also come to the meeting. All agreed that it would be a good idea to invite both Sherry and Steve. Ken suggested that they should discuss what needs to happen in order for small landowners to keep their land forested.

Kathy mentioned that at a future meeting she would like Rudy Edwards to talk about the federal bill that would determine how federal forest revenue is distributed among counties.

### **Snoqualmie Preservation Initiative**

Doug gave a summary of the Snoqualmie Preservation Initiative, a major effort that was announced yesterday, February 14, in the media. The initiative is a culmination of years of interest in preserving Falls Crossing, a tract of forest in the viewshed of Snoqualmie Falls owned by Puget Western, as well as other large forest tracts near the City of Snoqualmie. Doug emphasized that the initiative is a great example of cooperation between government, corporate and non-profit interests. He summarized the details of the initiative and emphasized the importance of the role of the Snoqualmie Tribe, which has approved of the effort. Lori Grant summarized that the end result, if everything works as planned, will be a net gain of 525 acres added to the urban growth area at Snoqualmie Ridge and almost 10,000 acres of forestland placed under a conservation easement, for a cost of two million dollars in public funds.

Dave Warren asked if the easement would require any specific forest practices or if the landowners involved would only have to abide by state forest practice rules. Doug

responded that there would likely be no additional encumbrances without paying more money and that the important step at this point is to keep the land from being developed.

#### **ESA 4(d) Rule / Tri-County Response and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas**

Harry Reinert gave an update of the Tri-County model 4 (d) proposal. The proposal consists of six components:

- Land Management
- Stormwater Management
- Regional Road Maintenance Program
- Watershed Planning
- Adaptive Management
- Habitat Funding Program

A summary of the six components, distributed by Harry, is enclosed. Harry believes that it will likely take a year before the proposal is approved by the federal government. Ken Konigsmark asked what will occur in the mean time to avoid the destruction of habitat. Harry responded that the ESA rule went into effect on January 8, so, technically, the federal government has the authority to prohibit take until the 4 (d) rule is approved.

Harry mentioned that one of the issues to be negotiated is the “65/10” rule, which would require that landowners in the rural area clear no more than 65% of the trees on their parcel and that they limit the impervious surface to 10% of the total parcel. The National Marine Fisheries Service is concerned that a 65/10 regulation applied to individual parcels may not result in 65% forest cover throughout a watershed. NMFS would prefer that permits be issued depending on the status of forest cover throughout the watershed.

Manuela Winter gave an update on the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCAs). The County needs to comply with the Growth Management Act requirement to protect priority species’ habitat as a type of critical area. The regulations will authorize the County to designate areas that need to be protected as habitat. Landowners that have critical habitat on their land will be required to comply with state management recommendations or do a habitat management plan. DDES is in the process of determining when a study will be required and what it will involve. The County is using the state practices for determining priority species habitat as a starting point with the intention of refining those practices to meet County objectives.

King County is also switching to the WADNR water typing system. Manuela outlined the state system. In May 2000, the County issued a public rule defining that any stream two-feet wide with less than a 20% grade is considered to be salmon habitat.

Jean asked how the buffer regulations are applied. Manuela responded that when a landowner applies for a permit, s/he will not be allowed to develop inside the buffers. Rudy Edwards expressed concern that regulations in the rural area will not save salmon if there are no restoration efforts in the urban areas. Harry responded that the County is very interested in ensuring that the cities do their part as well. Steve Ketz emphasized that any honest fish biologist would say that streams in the forested areas of the County are in good condition and that the problem is downstream in the urban area.

DDES is hoping to have an initial draft of the FWHCA regulations out for review in the next month. Harry will make sure that the RFC gets copies.

### **Comprehensive Plan Update**

Lori Grant gave a final summary of the Comp Plan that passed Council on Monday, Feb 5.

Regarding the TDC program, all of the policies that give priority to the Rural Forest Focus Areas are in place. Development credits will be counted at one per five acres regardless of zoning. Parcels in the FPD will be allowed to be sending sites with credits counted at one per eighty acres with a provision that lots between fifteen and eighty acres will be worth one credit, as suggested by the Commission.

Golf courses will be prohibited in the Rural Forest Focus Areas.

The rural clustering policy established that the set-aside tract shall be permanently set-aside and may be used for forestry or agriculture.

Regarding the forest practice permit moratorium, the moratorium will continue to be placed on the entire parcel rather than on only the harvested portion. However, by December of 2001, the County will develop a list of uses that are deemed to be compatible with forestry and will therefor be exempted from the moratorium.

Regarding the removal of land from the FPD, the policy stands that land can only be removed through a sub-area plan and when there exists a historical commercial use. However, the Council is looking for future input from the RFC regarding more appropriate criteria for removal.

The policy stating that lots in the FPD created after Jan 1, 2001 could not be used for residential development was modified to say that the County will do further study by the end of the year to devise ways to keep the FPD in forestry. Both Weyerhaeuser and Plum Creek signed an agreement that they will not segregate their large landholdings during the course of this study. The RFC will certainly be involved in this study. The County is looking for someone to lead the research effort – perhaps the UW College of Forest

Resources. The requirement for a forest management plan when developing in the FPD still stands, as does the regulation that only the smaller of seven acres or 35% of a parcel can be cleared for non-forest uses, including agriculture.

Regarding the size restriction on non-residential uses in the rural area, Council decided that rather than implementing a size restriction, there should be a moratorium on all new schools and churches in the rural area for a ten month period. The GMA requires that there be a public hearing on any moratorium within 60 days. There will be a task force developed to look at the full range of issues regarding large institutional uses in the rural area.

All three site-specific land-use amendments (I-90 North, I-90 South, and East Lake Sawyer) were approved. For both I-90 North and South, there are stipulations that the development be clustered and that there be public access to the set-aside land and to adjacent lands.

The amendment that would change the “rounding rule” from 7.5 acres to 9.5 acres was upheld.

Kathy reiterated that the requirement for a forest management plan when developing in the FPD was upheld. The forestry program is developing a public rule to establish the details associated with the requirement. This new regulation will likely place an additional burden on the technical assistance foresters. Benj will send the draft public rule to the Commission via e-mail. Any comments should be submitted promptly.

### **Ecoroofs**

Rob Harrison commented that the Northwest Ecobuilding Guild is beginning a study of “ecoroofs” as a way of addressing the problem of surface water runoff. They plan to develop 30 test panels and begin 15 actual projects. The projects will be monitored to study the effectiveness of the roofs at reducing runoff.

### **Workplan**

There was inadequate time remaining to discuss the workplan in detail. Benj emphasized the need for the RFC to discuss the 2001 workplan in order to set their priorities for the coming year. He distributed a list of potential work items and asked the Commission to consider which items should be prioritized. The workplan will be the main (and hopefully only) item on the March agenda.

### **Officer nominations**

Jean nominated Doug McClelland as chair. Nomination seconded. Doug accepted with the provision that he will be out of town from the middle of June until the end of August. Jean nominated Ken Konigsmark as vice-chair. Nomination seconded. Ken accepted the nomination.

Doug nominated Gordon Bradley as a member-at-large. Nomination seconded. Gordon had to leave early and was not available to respond to the nomination. Benj will check with Gordon to see if he will accept.

Doug nominated Steve Ketz as a member-at-large. Steve declined the nomination.

Kathy suggested that one member-at-large position be reserved for a new member once appointed. All agreed that was a good idea.

### **Next meeting**

Tuesday, March 20 at Mercerview Community Center.